



FRENCH CULTURAL CENTRE  
NAIROBI CITY PLAYERS

present

THE LADY OF THE CAMELLIAS



1981

By Alexandre Dumas  
Directed by  
PETER AND PAULA BROWN

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To be



or not to be



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Nairobi  City Players

in conjunction with

**THE FRENCH CULTURAL CENTRE**

Present

**THE LADY OF THE CAMELLIAS**  
**[La Dame aux Camélias]**

By

**ALEXANDRE DUMAS, FILS**

Produced by

**PETER AND PAULA BROWN**

at

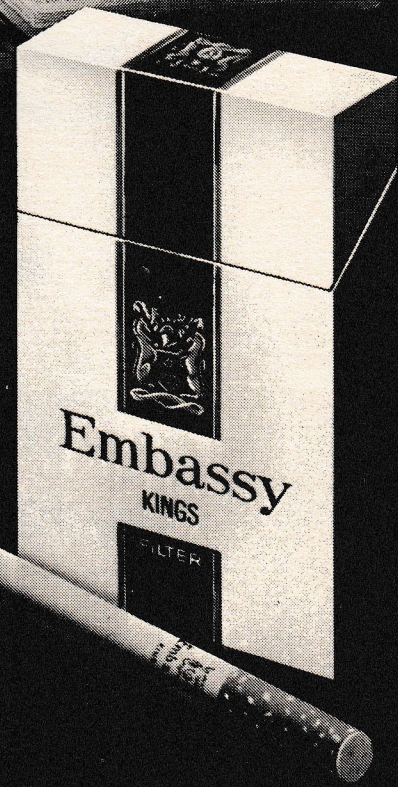
**THE FRENCH CULTURAL CENTRE**

**13th to 24th October 1981**



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It would be hard to find in Kenya a more dynamic married couple in theatre than Peter and Paula Brown. They started working together when they first met in Salisbury, Zimbabwe where they were both performing in Tennessee Williams "The Rose Tattoo". It is interesting to note their theatrical experience both individually and together.

Peter Brown started his theatrical career in a large R.A.F. hangar in Hawarden. He says that this is the coldest place in England and fires were lit a week before a first night. Since this beginning he has usually performed in considerably warmer places. Paula started her theatrical career in Salisbury playing "Sabrina" in "Sabrina Fair", the start of a succession of leading parts. She says that this was helped by working with some very good actors, including many professionals, and keeping her "eyes and ears open".

As an actor Peter Brown has an impressive list of parts to his name including "Algy" in "The Importance of Being Earnest", Leader of Chorus in "Lysistrata", "Proctor" in "The Crucible", "King Henry" in Shakespeare's "Henry V" and "Macbeth" in "Macbeth", the leading man in both "The Seven Year Itch" and "Inadmissible Evidence", "George" in "Of Mice and Men", "Big Daddy" in "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof". His favourite part, however, was the truck driver in "The Rose Tattoo" — not surprising as this was when he met Paula.

Peter's productions as a director include "Journey's End", "The Gondoliers", "Under Milk Wood" (for the E.A. Theatre Guild), "A View From the Bridge" and "After the Fall" (both for Nairobi City Players), "Colombe", and "The Merry Widow" (for the Nairobi Music Society), and "Mother Courage".

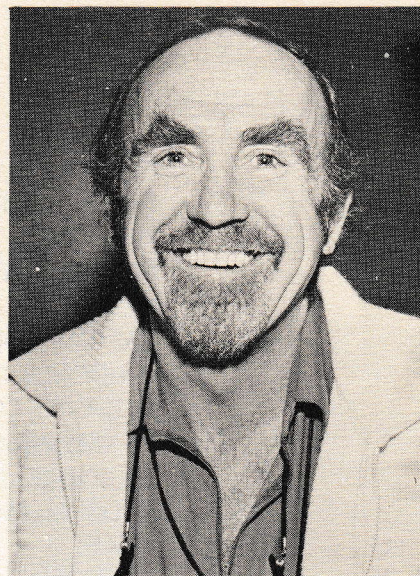
As an actress Paula Brown played the leads in "Sabrina Fair" and Anouilh's "Point of Departure" before meeting Peter in "Rose Tattoo" (not surprisingly her favourite part too), when she played — "Rosa", other parts include "Cecily" in "The Importance of Being Earnest", "The girl" in "Of Mice and Men", "Polly Garter" in "Under Milk Wood", "Colombe", and the "Niece" in "A View From the Bridge." Most recently she has been seen as "Cat" in "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof."

Peter and Paula's joint productions include "The Lesson", "Krapp's Last Tape", "The Dumb Waiter", "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" (for The Theatre Group) and now "The Lady of the Camellias".

This is Peter and Paula's second visit to Kenya after ten years elsewhere at the Kenya Coast, then U.K., then in West Africa and, most recently in Latin America. While in the Argentine they performed selected extracts from the works of Oscar Wilde, John Osborne, Thornton, Shakespeare and Dylan Thomas as a duo under the title "Love a Marriage".

The Nairobi City Players is happy to welcome them back to the group and hopes to have the pleasure of working again with these two very talented and hard-working theatre people.

## THE PRODUCERS PETER AND PAULA BROWN



### THE NAIROBI CITY PLAYERS

In September 1956 an "acting group" was formed to be known as the Nairobi City Players, and in its Constitution were set down the following aims and objects:-

- (a) Regularly to present theatrical productions of a good dramatic and artistic standard by utilising and co-ordinating the best available talent, producers, set designers and technical stage assistants.
- (b) Towards the fulfilment of (a) above, to be unstinting in the cost of production, subject to the limit set by the Standing Committee.
- (c) To take all necessary steps to encourage the drama and to improve the facilities available for theatrical productions. The City Players have adhered rigidly to these aims from their formation and since that time have presented a total of 93 productions including 34 full-scale musicals, mostly at the Kenya National Theatre.

The Nairobi City Players under the esteemed patronage of the Hon. Charles Njonjo, EGH, MP, are controlled by a Standing Committee as follows:-

Bryan Epsom (Chairman)	Gordon Purcell	Frank Edwards (Treasurer)
Brenda Goodman (Secretary)	Benny Goodman (Executive Member)	Joe Muriithi
Ken Latham	Ivor Maynard	Carol Johnson
Rurik Ronsky	Marianne Herne	Manny Sidnick
Peter Pearce	Jeff Arnold	Dick Shortt

In addition to the Committee there is an Associate Membership limited of 75 members.

# THE LADY OF THE

by  
**ALEXANDRE DUMAS**  
Produced by  
**Peter and Paula Br**

## THE CAST

NANINE	— Helen Watkins
LA BARON de VARVILLE	— Peter Brown
NICHETTE	— Jackie Holt
MARGUERITE GAUTIER	— Paula Brown
OLYMPE	— Helen McGinty
SAINT-GAUDENS	— Bryan Epsom
PRUDENCE DUVERNOY	— Maureen Turner
M. GASTON RIEUX	— Peter Griffiths
M. ARMAND DUVAL	— Martin Mould
LE COMTE de GIRAY	— Peter Griffiths
M. DUVAL (ARMAND'S FATHER)	— Hugh Cowie
ANAIS	— Jackie Holt
DOCTOR	— Paul Samuelsdorff
MANSERVANT	— Hugh Cowie

## SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

### ACT 1

Scene I	— Marguerite's drawing room, Paris.
Scene II	— The same, four days later

INTERVAL OF 20 MINUTES

### ACT II

Scene I	— A house at Auteuil, near Paris, three months later
Scene II	— Olympe's house in Paris, one month later
Scene III	— Marguerite's bedroom, Paris, six months later

### MUSIC

"La Valse" by Raval  
Marguerite & Armand's Theme:

Arranged by	— Mary Oyer
Played by	— Stuart Hirst (violin)
	— Dick Moss (violin)
	— Per Kristensen (viola)
	— Mary Oyer (cello)

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# OF THE CAMELLIAS

by  
ANDRE DUMAS (FILS)

Produced by  
ter and Paula Brown

## THE PRODUCTION TEAM

Production Manager	Dick Shortt
Stage Manager	Peter Davies
Prompt	Denise White
Construction Manager	Ivor Maynard
Production Secretary	Frances Cattermole
Set Design	Jon Mills, Dick Shortt & Doug Harvey
Set Decor	Paula Herr, Judi Janowski & Linda Fountain
Set Construction & Painting	Ken Latham, Manny Sidnick, Peter Davies, Dick Shortt, Peter Grayson, Jon Mills, Steve Thompson, Barbara Maynard, Brenda, Gail and Glen Goodman
Stage Crew	Ken Latham, Ligia Dias, Ivor Maynard, Frances Cattermole, June Shaw, Christine English, Jon Mills, Dick Shortt, Chris Shortt
Lighting Design	Peter Brown
Lighting Installation	John Keel & Dick Shortt
Lighting Operation	John Keel
Sound Installation & Operation	Peter Stratford
Costume Design	Paula Herr and Judi Janowski
Costumes & Curtain Team	Paul Herr, Judy Janowski, Chris Shortt, Shirley Bishop, Mary Epsom
Dresser	Ligia Dias
Make-up	Audrey Dias
Properties	Linda Fountain
Assisted by:	Dottie Mark & June Shaw
Front of House & Ticket Sales	Ken Latham & Rurik Ronsky
Assisted by:	NCP Associate Lady Members
Publicity	Bryan Epsom
Programme	Marianne Herne & Marilyn Kuschel
Advertising	Joe Muriithi
Programme Printer	the 'A' promoter ltd.
Poster Design	Jill Loupekine
Poster Screen	Vogue Screen Print
Photographs	Mahindra Patel of Foto Unique

The Nairobi City Players also wish to thank all those who have assisted in any way after this programme went to press.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND APPRECIATIONS

Studio Jayne	— for assistance with costumes
Idiffico Ltd.	— for set construction facilities
Robbialac Paints	— for supply of paint
Greengates Kindergarten & Holiday School	— for rehearsal facilities
Westlands Fish Shop	— for supply of poultry
Nalin Nail Works	— for supply of nails
Thaker Singh & Sons	— for supply of materials
Bashir Electrical Service	— for supply of materials
Leonard Moore Ltd.	— for loan of furniture
Mr. Rurik Ronsky	— for transport
Theatre Arts '80 Ltd.	— for curtains and screen
Kenya National Theatre	— for lighting gels
Aisthorpe Timber Engineers	— for supply of material
Mr. Mohamed (the 'A' promoter ltd.)	— for assistance with the programme
Unicutters Salon Unisex	— for Marguerite's Act 1 wig and Armand's hair
Salon 680	— for Nichette's hair and Anais' wig
Frank Daykin	— for furniture & fittings
Dattoos Glassware Mart Ltd.	— for glasses
M-Line Electrical Service	— for supply of materials
Dodhia Foam	— for the mattress
Our Advertisers	— for their support

The Nairobi City Players wish to acknowledge all those persons who willingly gave their assistance in many ways after this programme went to press. "The Players" are most grateful for their co-operation.

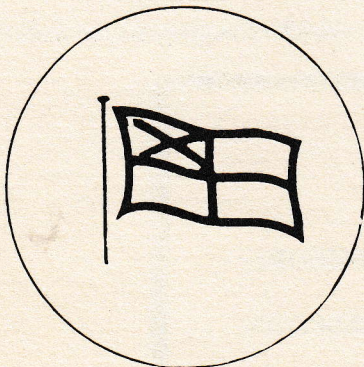
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## MARTIN MOULD "M. ARMAND DUVAL"

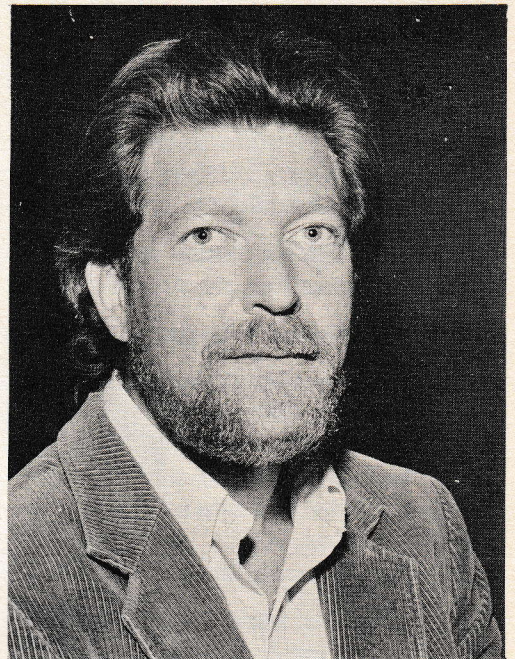
Although Martin Mould has featured as an actor comparatively recently (he made a notable debut in the Theatre Group's "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" earlier this year) he has been deeply interested in theatre for a number of years. This is not surprising as his profession is the scientific study of literature and languages. Martin is a Ph.D. in Linguistics at the University of Nairobi. He specialises in the Bantu languages of East Africa and is a Lecturer in Linguistics and African languages. So, why is he in a French play acted in English? Life is full of surprises!

He is American, born in Boston. He is no stranger to East Africa, however. While in the American Peace Corps in Uganda, he taught literature and drama at Jinja College and during that time produced and directed "Tobias and the Angel".

He sings in the bass section of the Nairobi Music Society chorus.

He has been a movie buff all of his life.

He says his hobbies are movies, eating, African & Middle Eastern & Indian traditional music and — giving up smoking.



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# THE BACKGROUND TO THE STORY

The story of Marguerite Gautier is based on a true experience of Alexandre Dumas when he was a young man. He met Alphonsine Marie Duplessis when she was one of the most famous and successful courtesans of her time.

This "extraordinary creature" was born and brought up as a simple peasant girl. From being a street prostitute at the age of fourteen, she became one of the most famous courtesans of France, married a Viscount in a Registry Office in Kennington, London, and died of consumption in her luxurious Paris apartment.

Young Dumas was presented to her in 1844 when she was the mistress of the old Count Stackelberg, who probably did not prevent her from seeking diversion elsewhere. One day while receiving some friends in her apartment, she began to cough up blood. Dumas' sympathy and concern so moved her that they became lovers. It was a brief and sad affair; she could not afford to give up her way of life and he, as a struggling young writer, could not afford to keep her.

In his letter of farewell, Dumas wrote: "I am not sufficiently rich to love and take care of you as I wish. Therefore, let us forget each other. For me, you are an unattainable ideal of happiness."

Dumas went abroad to forget. When he returned she was dead.

Out of his experience Dumas fashioned one of the great love stories of all time. When the story "La Dame aux Camellias" was published in 1847, it caused a scandal. The play was written two years later, but the actual presentation was delayed for three years because of censorship difficulties. Since the first theatre production in 1862, the role of "La Dame" has been played on the stage by every great actress, including Sarah Bernhardt, Eleonora Duse and Edwige Feuillere. At least two films have been made, the most well-known being the celebrated "Camille" with Greta Garbo and Robert Taylor. Verdi's "La Traviata", his most popular opera, is based on the same story and the leading role has been sung by, among many others, Dame Nelly Melba, Maria Callas and Beverly Sills.

The play has been inspired two ballets, and last year the B.B.C. presented a very successful version of "The Lady of the Camellias" on television.

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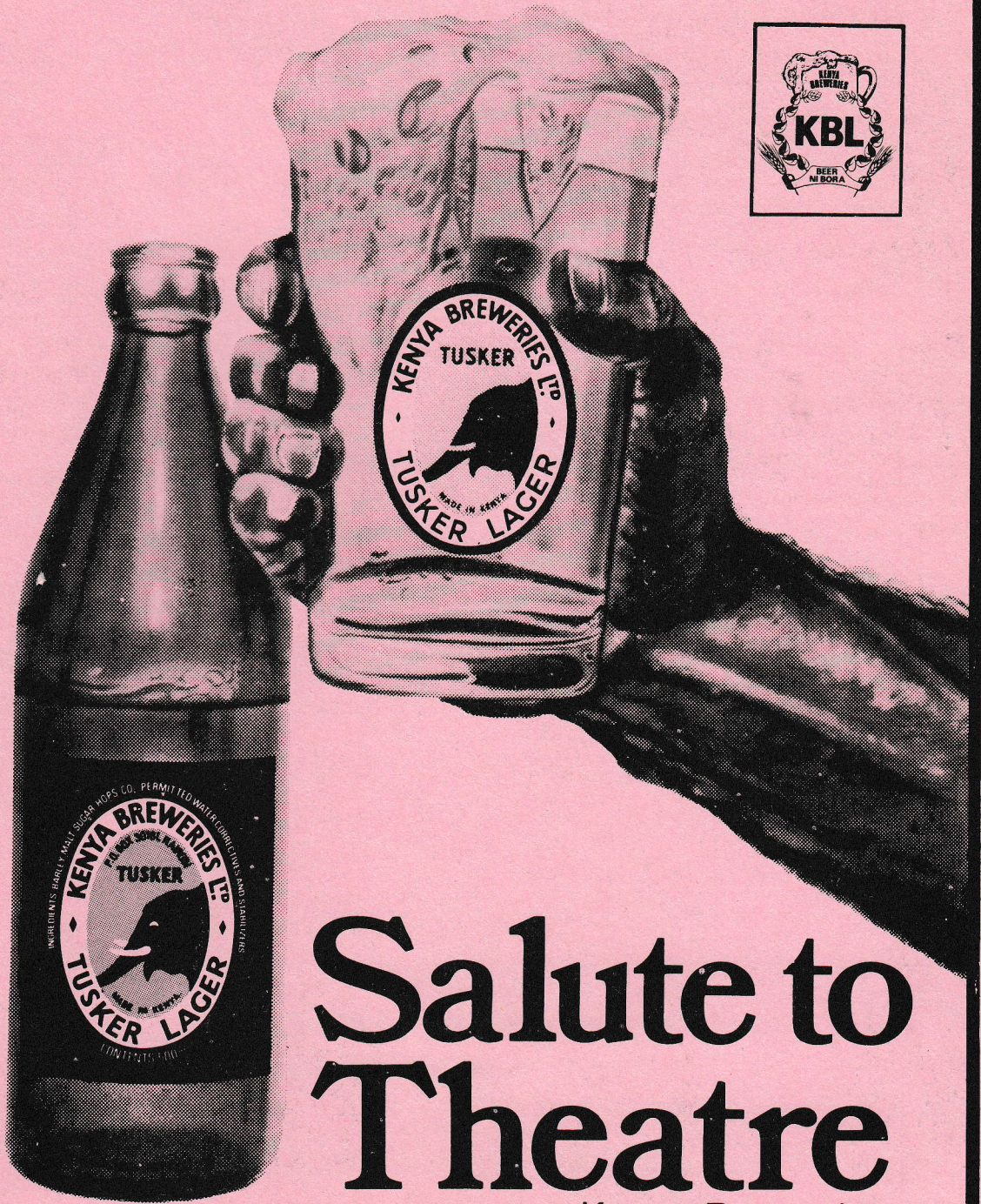
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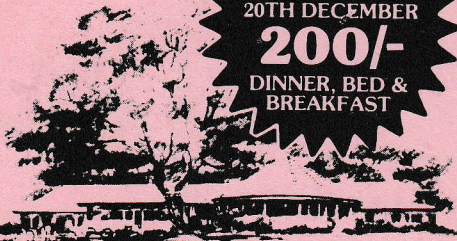
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